

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Amend the paragraph at page 28, lines 11-18, as follows:

Stated more specifically, (1) after hot rolling, cooling to a bainite bainite transformation range is carried out and that temperature range is maintained for 50 to 200 seconds before winding, or (2) the same treatment may be carried out in hot rolling, optionally cold rolling, continuous annealing and cooling. Either one of the above treatments (1) and (2) may be employed but when both are employed, more excellent characteristic properties are obtained.

Amend the paragraph at page 29, lines 14-19, as follows:

It is recommended to carry out cold rolling which is optionally carried out at a cold rolling rate of about 30 to 70 %. Further, as for continuous annealing, it is recommended to cool at an average cooling rate of 5°C/s or more and carry out austempering at a bainite bainite transformation range. The present invention is in no way limited to these methods.

Amend the paragraph at page 30, lines 1-13, as follows:

A steel piece containing chemical components shown in Table 1 (unit in Table 1 is mass%) was continuously cast, and the obtained slab was subjected to solution treatment at 1,280°C for 10 hours, heated at 1,200°C, finish rolled at 900°C, cooled and wound up at about 500°C to obtain a 3 mm-thick hot rolled steel sheet. The hot rolled steel sheet was cold rolled to a thickness of 1.2 mm. The cold rolled steel sheet was subjected to recrystallization annealing (continuous annealing) in a continuous annealing line (CAL) in accordance with a commonly used method and cooled to a bainite bainite transformation range. By changing

the heat retention time (austempering time) at that temperature range to 30 to 300 seconds, various steel sheets were obtained.